

This Station Owner Fought The FCC, And Won

By Adam R Jacobson

RBR + TVBR

The Chicago Cubs aren't the only ones celebrating a victory.

Steve Kingston, owner of Annapolis, Md.-area Class A **WRNR-FM 103.1**, also has a win to cheer about.

In a public notice issued without comment on Oct. 28, a translator set to take the same frequency in heart of Baltimore has been nixed by the Commission. The rescission of a grant to the translator's owner came after an August 30 petition for reconsideration was filed by Kingston's **Empire Broadcasting**.

The filing proves that translators are subject to any interference claims, and that Class As and above have full recourse to protest.

[As RBR + TVBR reported Sept. 6](#), Class C Christian Talk & Teaching WRBS-AM 1230 in Baltimore won FCC approval to gain an FM translator as part of the FCC's AM revitalization act.

Specifically, the FCC gave its blessings to the relocation of FM translator **W232CL** from Roxana, Del., near vacation spot Bethany Beach, to downtown Baltimore, where it was to become **W276DE**.

While **American FM Associates Inc.** owns the translator, the group is tied to **Peter and John Ministries**, owner of WRBS.

The grant allowed American FM Associates to move the translator from 94.3 MHz in Bethany Beach to 103.1 MHz in downtown Baltimore. In filings made with the FCC, veteran broadcast engineer Kyle Magrill stated, "A single-bay, directional, antenna will be used to eliminate interference to Class A co-channel station WRNR."

While that may have been true, Kingston's petition to reconsider took aim at American FM's lack of adequate notice of its Baltimore plans, with no indication of a shift from Delaware.

"If it were not for a brief mention in a blog, [Empire] might never have known about this incursion until the translator went on the air," the company said in its petition to the FCC.

After a two-month review, the FCC's final Broadcast Applications Public Notice for the month of October signaled a victory for WRNR, and Empire. The grant was rescinded, with an application reinstated to pending status on Oct. 14 per the request of American FM.

Yes, Empire's petition for reconsideration was officially dismissed as moot. But, without it, WRNR's interference in the area surrounding Baltimore-Washington International Airport and even along the important I-97 corridor could have been hampered, resulting in poor signal quality for what Kingston says is one-third of the WRNR audience.

Empire on Oct. 25 filed an informal objection to the FCC's decision to allow WRBS-AM to move forward with its desire to gain an FM home in Baltimore.

Kingston did not respond to RBR + TVBR's request for comment and was not at WRNR on Thursday.

On Nov. 1, a new application was filed with the Commission indicating that the 94.3 MHz frequency will be used in Baltimore for W276DE. Power is set for 6 watts, giving it coverage of areas to the immediate south and west of Inner Harbor.

[Previous article](#)